AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

- 1. (Original) Process for the synthesis of isobutyl methyl 1,4-dihydro-2,6-dimethyl-4-(2-nitrophenyl)-3,5-pyridine dicarboxylate (Nisoldipine) based on the reaction of isobutyl 2-(2-nitrobenzylidene)acetoacetate with methyl 3-aminocrotonate, added to the reaction mixture at a time or portionwise, in non-polar solvent, to give crude Nisoldipine.
- 2. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the non-polar solvent is selected from the group consisting of aliphatic or cycloaliphatic solvents.
- 3. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 2, wherein the solvent is selected from the group consisting of cyclohexane and/or n-hexane.
- 4. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction of isobutyl 2-(2-nitrobenzylidene)acetoacetate and methyl 3-aminocrotonate is carried out in the presence of 4-dimethylaminopyridine.
- 5. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein, downstream of the reaction of isobutyl 2-(2-nitrobenzylidene)acetoacetate with methyl 3-aminocrotonate in a non-polar solvent to give crude Nisoldipine, said Nisoldipine is purified by crystallisation from a water/water soluble solvent mixture to give a pure Nisoldipine final product.
- 6. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 5, wherein the water/water soluble solvent mixture is acetone/water.

- 7. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein, upstream of the reaction of isobutyl 2-(2-nitrobenzylidene)acetoacetate with methyl 3-aminocrotonate, said Nisoldipine synthesis intermediate, i.e. isobutyl 2-(2-nitrobenzylidene)acetoacetate, is obtained by causing 2-nitrobenzaldehyde to react with isobutyl acetoacetate in methylene chloride, as solvent, in the presence of a catalytic amount of piperidine formate at a temperature of -10°C to 50°C.
- 8. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 7, wherein the reaction of 2-nitrobenzaldehyde with isobutyl acetoacetate is carried out at a temperature of 20°-50°C.
- 9. (Original) The process a claimed in claim 8, wherein the temperature ranges from 27° to 33°C.
- 10. (Original) The process a claimed in claim 7, wherein the catalyst, piperidine formate, forms in situ in the reaction mixture by addition of equimolar amounts of formic acid and piperidine.
- 11. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 7, wherein the amount of catalyst, piperidine formate, used is 0.05-0.7 mol catalyst/mol 2-nitrobenzaldehyde.
- 12. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 11, wherein the amount of catalyst is 0.05-0.6 mol catalyst/mol 2-nitrobenzaldehyde.

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- 13. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 12, wherein the amount of catalyst is 0.25 mol catalyst/mol 2-nitrobenzaldehyde.
- 14. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 7, wherein isobutyl 2-(2-nitrobenzylidene)acetoacetate is isolated in the presence of aqueous acetic acid as solvent.

Claims 15-22 (Canceled)